

50 ways to love your pastor



Your Pastor Matters

It is our prayer that these 50 practical suggestions will help you and others in your congregation begin to demonstrate love and support for your pastor, staff, and their families. The Apostle Paul encourages us to help our leaders to be healthy:

“And now, friends, we ask you to honor those leaders who work so hard for you, who have been given the responsibility of urging and guiding you along in your obedience. Overwhelm them with appreciation and love!”

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, The Message

A Few Statistics

Pastors are under tremendous pressure. As a result, the burnout of our leadership is a major crisis facing the church today.

We expect pastors to be biblical scholars, powerful preachers, sensitive counselors, capable managers, effective administrators, successful fundraisers and much more.

Pastors work long hours to meet all the demands placed upon them and yet many feel inadequate and unappreciated.

- 75% of pastors fight depression
- 90% feel they are inadequately trained to cope with ministry demands
- 33% state that being in the ministry is an outright hazard to their family
- 80% of seminary and Bible school graduates leave the ministry within 5 years
- 1,400 ministers leave the ministry every month

Pray

- **Pray daily** for your pastor and family!
- Pray for the Lord's protection over your pastor, their ministry and their family.
- **Form a prayer group** that prays regularly for your pastor and church.
- Arrive at church early enough to pray for the services, leaders, and Lord's blessing.
- **Pray for insights** in how to be most effective in caring for your pastor and family. God will lead you if you are open!

Support Your Church

- **Take your place** in the life of your church! Discover your spiritual gift and use it.
- Be a consistent Christian. Regularly attend and support the ministries of your church.
- **Continue to develop your own personal walk with the Lord** – keep on growing.
- Make your own spouse and children your priority!
- Take an active part in at least one ministry of your church, giving help and/or leadership.
- Take the time to understand your pastor's personality, vision and, above all, their heart!
- **Be teachable** – open to new thoughts and ideas.
- If you are not tithing, start working toward that goal – then let your pastor know of your decision.
- **Tell people about your church.** Invite them to worship and introduce them to your pastor.
- Understand the many expectations placed upon a pastor – and monitor your own expectations.
- **Give new ideas a chance.** “But we have always done it that way” are some of the most deflating words a creative pastor can hear.
- Never compare your current pastor with a former pastor. It is unfair and stands a good chance of causing discord.
- **Share Christ** in the marketplace, with neighbors and friends.

**overwhelm them
with appreciation and love**

Care for Your Pastor

- **Pay your pastor as well as you possibly can!** Overwhelm them with generosity!
- Be sure your pastor has at least one day off a week - then make sure it is taken!
- **Provide adequate paid vacation.**
- Encourage your pastor in continuing education and spiritual enrichment, providing both time and finances.
- Make sure conferences and seminars for your pastor and spouse are not considered vacation time.
- **Care for your pastor's health.** Do all you can to provide adequate health insurance.
- As a church, make annual physicals mandatory.
- If possible, a membership to a health club is a wise investment for your pastor and staff.
- Take your pastor fishing, golfing, sailing, etc., not to talk about church, but to play!
- **Never say negative things** about your pastor or church in front of family or others. Talk directly to your pastor when you have concerns.
- A gift card to a restaurant or grocery store is deeply appreciated.
- Help keep your pastor's technology relatively current and working well.
- **Write a note** telling your pastor something you learned from a recent sermon.
- Show appreciation to your pastor whenever possible.
- Remember, pastors consider themselves to be caregivers. It may be hard for your pastor to receive care so be relentless!
- Ask, ask and ask again - **"Pastor, how can I help you?"**

Send your pastor and spouse to SonScape Retreats for seven days of rest, renewal, and life change!

SonScape Retreats focuses on . . . spiritual formation, marriage enrichment, burnout prevention, and crisis intervention for those in Christian ministry.

For additional information, a current retreat schedule and how you can make it possible for your pastor to attend, go to our website at sonscaperetreats.org or contact us at 888.766.7227 or at info@sonscape.org.

Care for Your Pastor's Family

- **Protect the privacy** of your pastor and family and their time together.
- Remember the church hired the pastor, not the pastor's spouse.
- **Allow your pastor's spouse to be himself.**
- It has been said that the hardest role in the church is that of the pastor's spouse. Evaluate the expectations placed on them, including your own.
- As with the pastor, do not compare your pastor's spouse with a former pastor's spouse. It is not right, nor fair.
- **Ministry is hard on marriages.** Encourage your pastor and spouse to find and attend events that enrich marriage, then make finances available.
- Plan a surprise gift for your pastor and spouse - several days at a B&B will always be welcome!
- If there are young children, offer to watch them, giving your pastor and spouse time away.
- **Allow your pastor's children to be themselves.** Love them for who they are.
- Remember your pastor's children are children - like yours, they are not perfect.
- Support and encourage your pastor's children by finding out what they're interested in and talking to them about those interests.
- **Remember the birthdays** and wedding anniversary of your pastor and family.
- **Be aware of any special needs of your pastor's family.**
- Drop a note to your pastor's family to express appreciation and brighten their day.
- Be diligent but sensitive in offering care to your pastor's spouse and family.

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